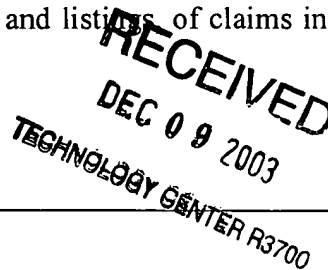




Amendments to the Claims

The following Listing of Claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims



1.(currently amended) A set of articles, each article comprising:

a product container having a polymeric body and a chamber within the body, each body having an exterior surface with a certain color, wherein the product container includes a flowable material within the chamber, and wherein the flowable material is a dental sealant or a dental restorative material;

a polymer coating extending over the exterior surface, the coating having a color that contrasts with the color of the exterior surface, the coating including a certain region and also a certain area that is spaced from the certain region, the polymer coating presenting a non-laser engraved genus identification mark in the certain area; and

a laser engraved identification mark formed within the certain region of the coating, the laser engraved identification mark being a species mark.

2.(previously presented) A set of articles according to claim 1 wherein the exterior surface of at least one article is visible within the species identification mark.

3.(previously presented) A set of articles according to claim 2 wherein the exterior surface visible within the species identification mark of at least one article is devoid of surface irregularities.

4.(previously presented) A set of articles according to claim 1 wherein the laser engraved identification mark of at least one article has a color that is different than the color of the polymer coating.

5. (cancelled)

6.(previously presented) A set of articles according to claim 1 wherein the polymer coating of at least one article has a color presenting the genus identification mark.

7.(previously presented) A set of articles, each article comprising:

a body having an exterior surface with a certain color;

a polymer coating extending over the exterior surface, the coating having a color that contrasts with the color of the exterior surface, the coating including a certain region and also a certain area that is spaced from the certain region, the polymer coating presenting a non-laser engraved genus identification mark in the certain area; and

a laser engraved identification mark formed within the certain region of the coating, the laser engraved identification mark being a species mark,

wherein the polymer coating of at least one article has a color presenting the genus identification mark,

wherein at least one article includes a container and a product in the container, and wherein the color of the polymer coating of the at least one article matches the color of the product.

8.(previously presented) A set of articles according to claim 7 wherein the product is a dental sealant or a dental restorative material.

9. (cancelled)

10-11 (cancelled)

12.(currently amended) A set of articles according to claim ~~[11]~~ 1 wherein the color of the polymer coating matches the color of the dental material.

13.(previously presented) A set of articles according to claim 1 wherein at least one article also includes a laser engraved identification mark that is spaced apart from the region of the exterior

surface and is more difficult to see than the laser engraved identification mark formed within the certain region.

14.(previously presented) A set of articles according to claim 13 wherein the laser engraved identification mark that is spaced apart from the region of the exterior surface includes information selected from a group consisting of shelf life data, expiration data, date of manufacture, serial number, batch code data and lot code data.

15.(currently amended) A set of articles comprising at least a first series and a second series, each article comprising:

a body having an exterior surface with a certain color;

a polymer coating extending over the exterior surface, the coating having a color that contrasts with the color of the exterior surface, the coating including a certain region and also a certain area that is spaced from the certain region, the color of the polymer coating presenting a non-laser engraved genus identification mark in the certain area; and

a laser engraved identification mark formed within the certain region of the coating, the laser engraved identification mark being a species mark,

wherein at least one article of the first series includes a container and a product in the container, wherein at least one article of the second series includes a container and a product in the container that is different than the product in the container of the first series, and wherein the color of the coating of the articles of the second series is different than the color of the coating of the articles of the first series.

16.(previously presented) A set of articles, each article comprising:

a body having an exterior surface with a certain color;

a polymer coating extending over the exterior surface, the coating having a color that contrasts with the color of the exterior surface, the coating including a certain region and also a certain area that is spaced from the certain region, the polymer coating presenting a non-laser engraved genus identification mark in the certain area; and

a laser engraved identification mark formed within the certain region of the coating, the laser engraved identification mark being a species mark,
wherein at least one article is an orthodontic band.

17.(currently amended) A method of marking a set of articles comprising the acts of:

selecting a polymer coating having a color that contrasts with the color of an exterior surface of each article;

applying the coating to a certain region of the exterior surface of each article; and

directing a laser beam toward the coating with sufficient power to cause at least a portion of the coating to undergo a chemical reaction and create an identification mark, wherein the act of directing the laser beam toward the coating creates a species mark, and wherein the act of applying the coating to the exterior surface of the article includes the act of creating a non-laser engraved genus mark that is distinct from the species mark,

wherein at least one article comprises a container made of a polymeric material and wherein the act of directing a laser beam toward the coating does not substantially soften the exterior surface of the container, and wherein the container includes a chamber and a dental sealant or dental restorative material within the chamber.

18.(previously presented) A method of marking a set of articles according to claim 17 wherein the act of directing a laser beam toward the coating causes at least some of the coating to volatilize.

19.(previously presented) A method of marking a set of articles according to claim 18 wherein the act of directing a laser beam toward the coating does not cause any surface irregularity on the exterior surface of at least one article.

20.(cancelled)

21.(previously presented) A method of marking a set of articles according to claim 17 wherein the act of directing a laser beam toward the coating causes at least some of the coating to polymerize.

22.(previously presented) A method of marking a set of articles according to claim 17 wherein the act of directing a laser beam toward the coating does not cause any substantial amount of surface irregularities on the exterior surface of the article.

23.(previously presented) A method of marking a set of articles according to claim 17 wherein the act of directing a laser beam toward the coating causes at least some of the coating to change color.

24.(previously presented) A method of marking a set of articles according to claim 23 wherein the act of directing a laser beam toward the coating does not cause any substantial amount of surface irregularities on the exterior surface of at least one article.

25. (cancelled)

26.(previously presented) A method of marking a set of articles according to claim 17 wherein the act of creating a genus mark includes the act of selecting a color of the polymer coating.

27.(previously presented) A method of marking a set of articles comprising the acts of:

selecting a polymer coating having a color that contrasts with the color of an exterior surface of each article;

applying the coating to a certain region of the exterior surface of each article; and

directing a laser beam toward the coating with sufficient power to cause at least a portion of the coating to undergo a chemical reaction and create an identification mark, wherein the act of directing the laser beam toward the coating creates a species mark, and wherein the act of applying the coating to the exterior surface of the article includes the act of creating a non-laser engraved genus mark that is distinct from the species mark,

wherein at least one article comprises a container and a product in the container, and wherein the act of selecting a polymer coating includes the act of selecting a polymer coating that has a color matching the color of the product in the container.

28.(previously presented) A method of marking a set of articles according to claim 27 wherein the product is a dental sealant or dental restorative material.

29.(previously presented) A method of marking a set of articles according to claim 17 and including the act of directing the laser beam toward at least one article at a location spaced from the coating in order to create another identification mark.

30.(previously presented) A method of marking a set of articles according to claim 29 wherein the act of directing the laser beam toward at least one article at a location spaced from the coating creates an identification mark that is more difficult to see than the identification mark that is created by the act of directing a laser beam toward the coating.

31.(previously presented) A method of marking a set of articles comprising the acts of:
selecting a polymer coating having a color that contrasts with the color of an exterior surface of each article;
applying the coating to a certain region of the exterior surface of each article; and
directing a laser beam toward the coating with sufficient power to cause at least a portion of the coating to undergo a chemical reaction and create an identification mark, wherein the act of directing the laser beam toward the coating creates a species mark, and wherein the act of applying the coating to the exterior surface of the article includes the act of creating a non-laser engraved genus mark that is distinct from the species mark,
wherein at least one article is an orthodontic band.

32.(previously presented) A method of marking a set of articles according to claim 17 wherein the act of creating the genus mark is carried out for all of the articles in the set before the act of directing a laser beam toward the coating is carried out for any article of the set.

8, 33. (new) A set of articles according to claim 15 wherein the product in the container of at least one article of the first series is a dental material that is especially suitable for use with certain teeth, and wherein the product in the container of at least one article of the second series is a dental material that is especially suitable for use with teeth other than the certain teeth.